





Tutorial

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Colour your fantasy figures

Having drawn and inked your fantasy figure in the previous tutorial on pages 30 to 35, you now need to think about colouring it. We'll show you the basics of using your Layers palette, as well as talk you through how to use some tools in your Tools palette, such as the Polygonal Lasso and the Elliptical Marquee.

We'll also show you how to cell-shade (colour using hard-edged shading techniques)

your character while adding in a detailed background to situate your fantasy character in its own unique environment. The way colours are used in this tutorial is not only pleasing to the eye, but also brings everything together to create an effective composition.

Finally, you'll learn how to add in effects such as shadows and sparkles, which will turn your work into a polished composition that's worthy of publication. ➤



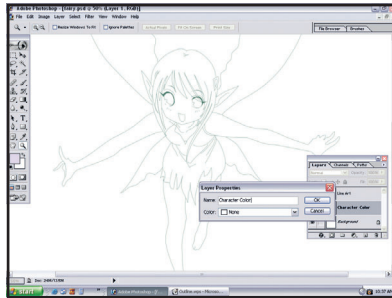
Expertise provided by Melissa Somerville. Melissa creates character designs for small projects between friends and computer-coloured anime-style artwork. You can contact her at [e] messachan@hotmail.com.



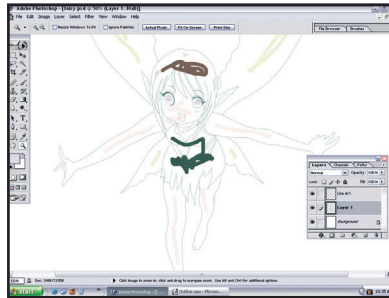
All the components needed to complete this tutorial can be found on the *Computer Arts Projects* CD73 in the Software\Tutorials\Tutorial files\Tutorial files\All\Fantasy fairy folder.

Part 1: Colour planning

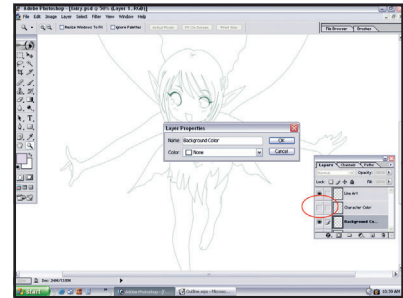
Start by coming up with some different colour and composition ideas...



1 First, think about colours. Click on the background layer in your Layers palette and then make a new layer and name it 'Character Colour'. This will enable you to colour under your line art later on.



2 Consider what type of skin tone and hair colour you want to give your character. Move around the picture using a circular brush to add little blotches of colour that you plan to use. Zoom out to do this. Also, don't worry about details just yet, because you can add them later.



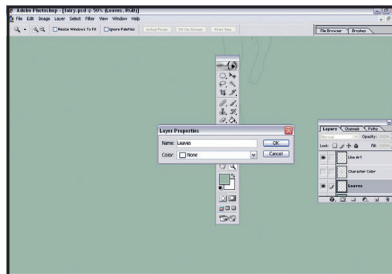
3 Start with the background. Hide your current layer by clicking on the eyeball and making a new layer. Name that 'Background Colour' and drag it underneath the 'Character Colour' layer. This is where the beginning of your background will go.

Part 2: Background basics

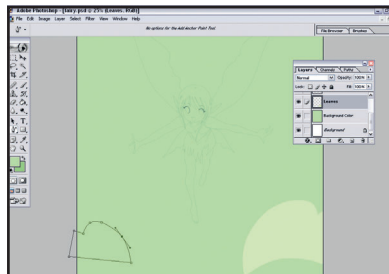
In this section, we'll begin to create an environment for the character to inhabit...

Background considerations

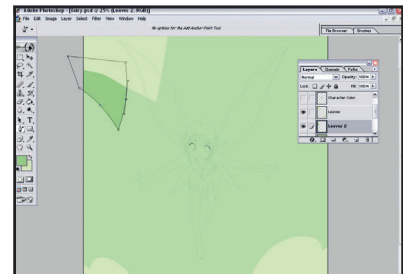
Backgrounds really help with the composition of a picture — whether you're adding a nature-type background or one loaded with brushes from your favourite artist. A lot of artists just throw on colours everywhere, add brushes in random spots, and expect the image to look nice. While some people enjoy abstract art like that, it's nice to have something a bit more considered.



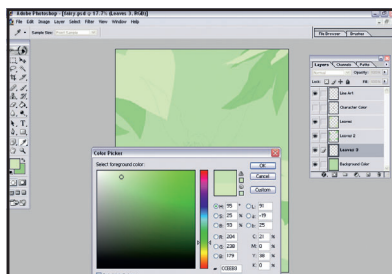
1 Select the Paint Bucket tool in your Tools palette and fill the 'Background Colour' layer with a green hue. Create a new layer above it and name it 'Leaves'. This is where we'll be adding leaves to the background.



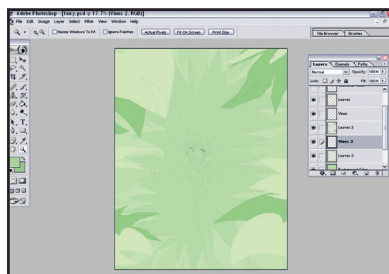
2 Begin to add some leaves. Alternate using colours lighter and darker than the background to give a sense of perspective to the environment. You could change the background colour and use the Pen tool to make the leaves.



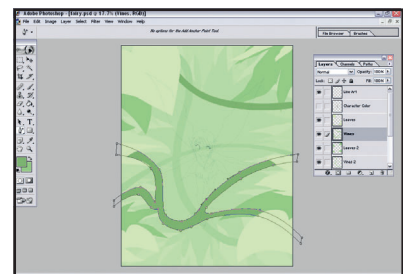
3 To add leaves underneath the existing ones, we're going to make a new layer under the 'Leaves' layer. Call this 'Leaves 2' and put darker coloured leaves on it so that they appear underneath the lighter-coloured leaves.



4 Next, make a new layer with another set of leaves. Name this 'Leaves 3'. Begin to mesh the colours into the background by choosing shades of green that are relatively close to the background colour you used.



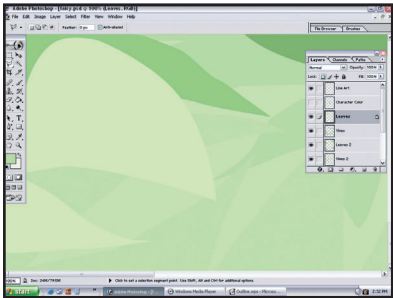
5 Now add some vines to give it that jungle-type appearance. Make a new layer between the layers 'Leaves 3' and 'Leaves 2'. Also make one between layers 'Leaves 2' and 'Leaves'. Name these layers 'Vines' and 'Vines 2'.



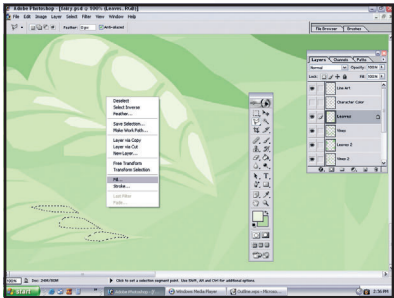
6 Begin adding your vines. Here, we're going to make them intersect on both layers. For 'Vines 2', we're using a colour a bit darker than the main background colour. For 'Vines', we'll be making the colour even darker.

Part 3: Detailing the background

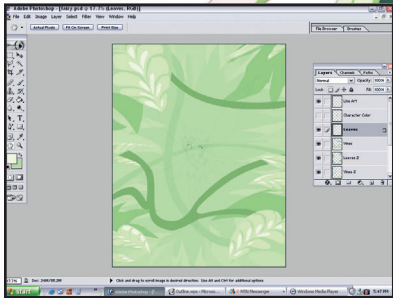
Add some details that will increase the perspective of the piece...



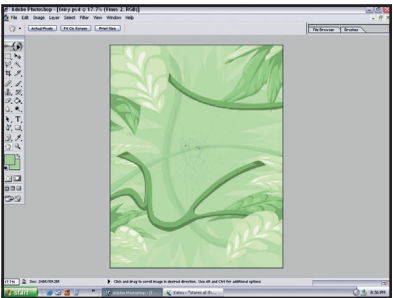
1 Begin by clicking on the 'Leaves' layer. Zooming in to around 100 per cent, use the Polygonal Lasso tool to add details such as shading and highlighting. To stay on that layer only, go to your Layers palette and select Lock. Click on the transparent box to lock your transparency.



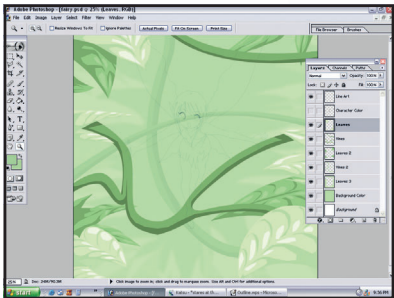
2 With the Polygonal Lasso tool, select the area you want to shade or highlight. When you're done 'connecting the lines', right-click/Ctrl-click on the area and select Fill. This will fill your selected area with your foreground colour.



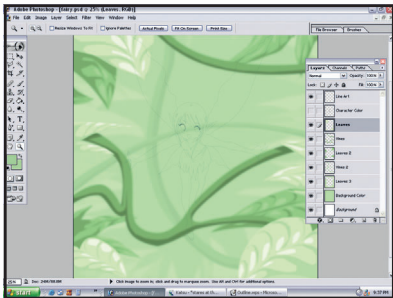
3 Continue this throughout the layer. Always keep the light source constant within your work. It's good to have an idea of where your light source is going to be so you can decide where to put the shades more easily instead of throwing them in a random spot.



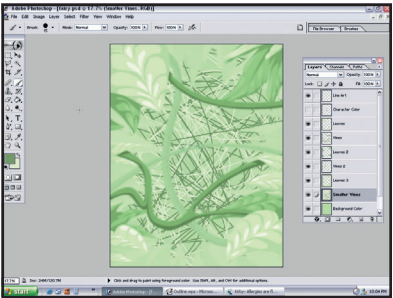
4 Do the same thing to the next layer of leaves. This will help build onto the background. It may look messy now, but it'll be worth it in the end. Once you're done, finish the rest of the Leaves and Vines layers except for the 'Leaves 3' layer.



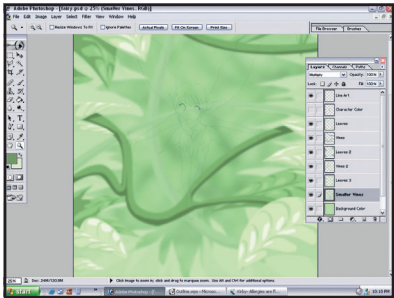
5 When you reach the 'Leaves 3' layer, don't shade and highlight it. Instead, go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and set it to 12 pixels. By blurring the background, you'll move the focus away from it.



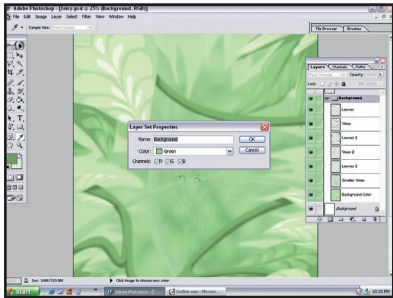
6 Next, Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur the layers 'Vines 2', 'Leaves 2' and 'Vines' at 9 pixels. 'Leaves' should be done in the same way, only with 6 pixels instead. This also helps with de-emphasising the background, making the viewer focus more on the character.



7 Click on the 'Background Colour' layer and create a new layer above it and name it 'Smaller Vines'. Next choose two colours that greatly contrast the shade of that background colour: one light and one dark. Set your brush to 15 pixels and go crazy!



8 Gaussian Blur this layer as well, but this time set it to 50 pixels. Then set the layer mode to Multiply. This makes all the white in the layer disappear and flattens the rest of the colours into the layers underneath.



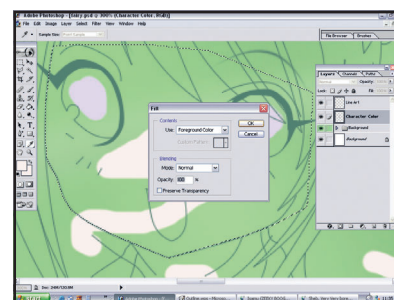
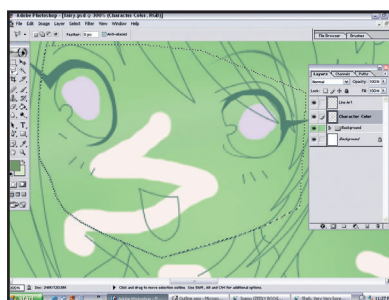
9 Before you start colouring the character, group the background files into a folder. At the bottom of your Layers palette, click on the folder-like button. Rename it by right-clicking/Ctrl-clicking and selecting Layer Set Properties. We named it 'Background' and made the Layer Set colour green. Drag all of your background layers underneath the Layer Set divider.

Part 4: Colouring the character

Begin to add basic colours to your character to bring her to life...

Resizing images

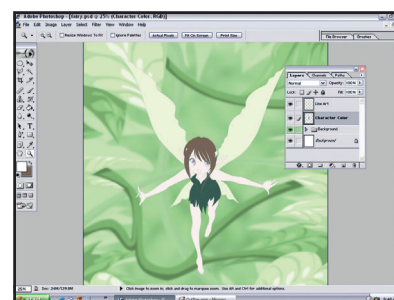
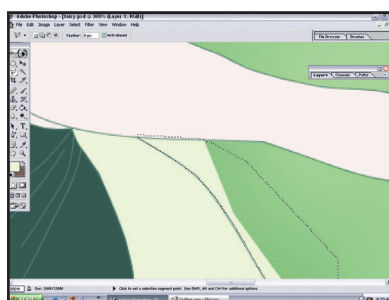
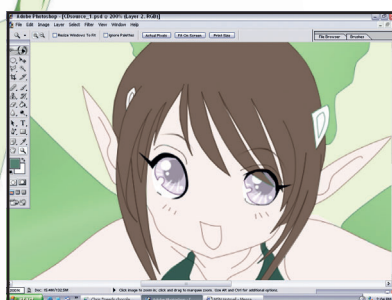
If you want to save computer memory, simply resize your image. Keeping your image at a large resolution (or size) gives you more detail and accuracy, especially in the early stages of inking. When you resize, it compresses some of the details, but gives you a better overall view of the image.



1 Let's begin with skin tones. It's a good idea to pick lighter colours for the character first so you can then go over them with darker colours. Make sure you're viewing your image at 100 per cent or more, and click on the Polygonal Lasso tool.

2 Begin to select the area that you want to colour. This is kind of like tracing along the lines. You can relax doing this type of thing because it's easy to stay on the lines.

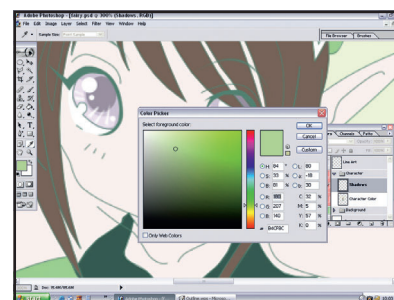
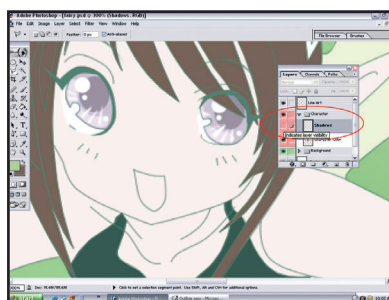
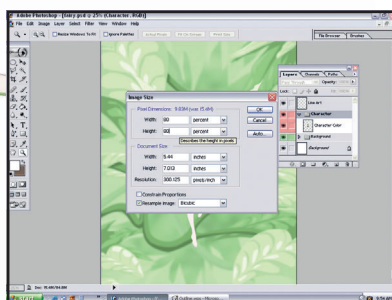
3 Right-click/Ctrl-click the selection and click on Fill. This will show you your properties. Just click OK and it will fill your selection with the foreground colour you've chosen. This is quite a lot quicker than manually colouring with a brush.



4 Repeat this step with the rest of the character by filling in all the base colours. Make sure you keep the colours subtle – you don't want to blind the viewer. This will take a few minutes, but be patient.

5 If you ever colour outside the lines by accident, just select the area outside the line and click the delete button.

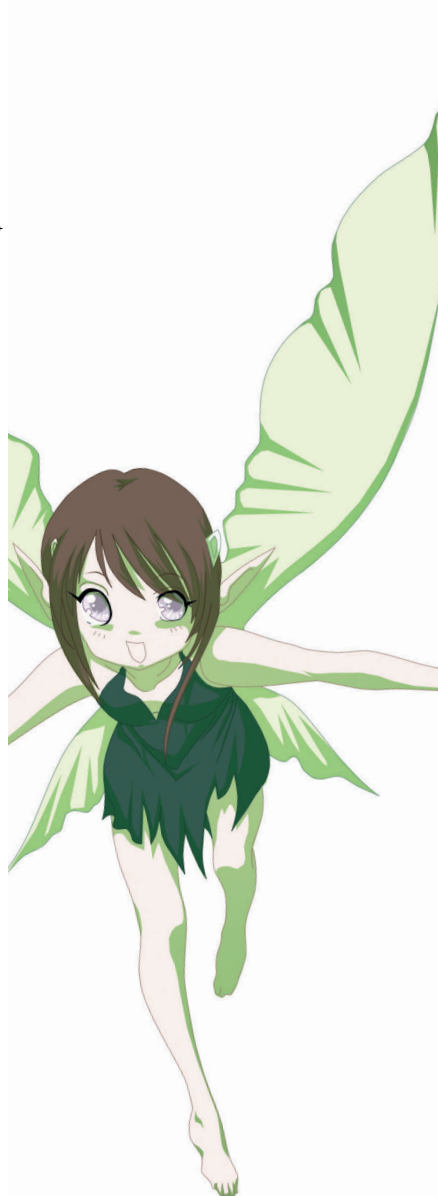
6 Create another Layer Set for the character. Drag all of the layers pertaining to the character (except for the background and the line art) and set it to a colour other than the Background Layer Set. Name this 'Character'.



7 Here, we're going to resize the picture slightly. Go to Image>Image Size. Set both your Width and Height to 80 per cent. Then click OK. You'll need to resize your image if it's slowing down your computer.

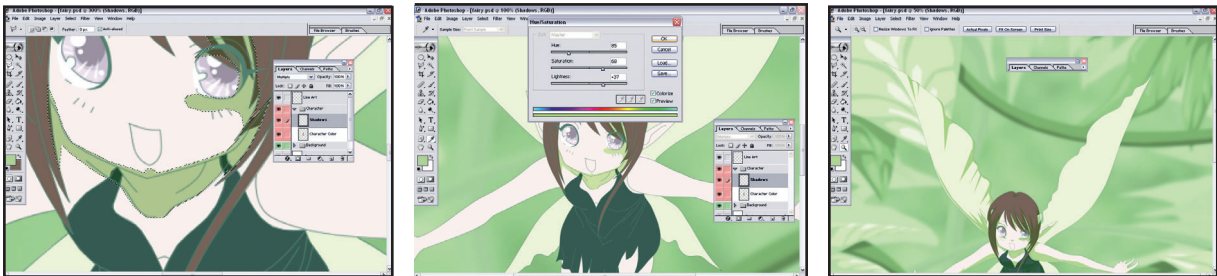
8 Click on your 'Character Colour' layer under the 'Character' Layer Set menu. Create a new layer above it and name it 'Shadows'. This is where your shadows will go. Set the layer to Multiply. This will bring down that shade onto your colours.

9 Zoom in to 100 to 200 per cent of your image and choose a green shade for the foreground colour. This is going to blend into your colours on previous layers and make them a darker colour with tints of whatever new colour you choose.



Part 5: Shading the character

In this section, we show you how to add shadows to the character...



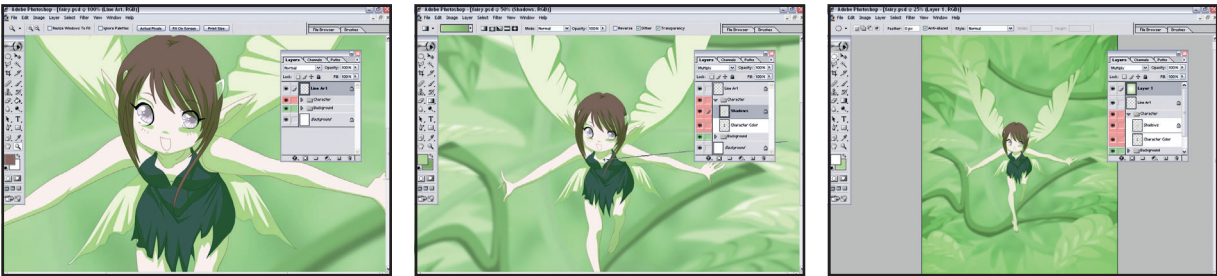
- 1 Begin the process of selecting the area of the shadow with the Polygonal Lasso tool. Remember to keep the light source constant. Here, the light is coming from the top because of the sun, which comes through other imaginary leaves.
- 2 Finish the rest of your character in the same way. You can always change your shading colour by going to Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. We're going to keep a green shade to retain the green tone of the image.
- 3 Since the wings are drawn like frills, we're going to shade them like frills. Every time you see a bend or a curve outwards, shade a crease. It's like shading folds in clothing.

Part 6: Finishing touches

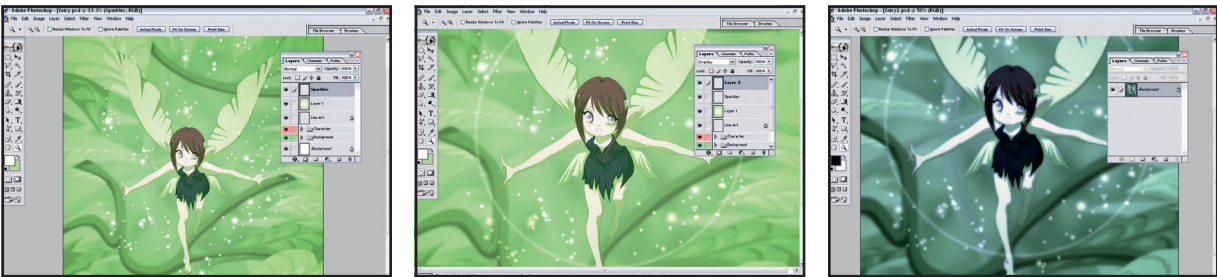
Add the final elements to complete your fantasy fairy composition...

Copyright

Once you've finished your image, we suggest adding in a small text layer with your name and signature on it so people know it's your work. Also, if you want to make the image smaller, you can resize it and crop off the edges a bit to give your character more focus.



- 1 Now let's change the line art. Click on the 'Line Art' layer and lock the transparency by clicking the transparency box. Take the brush, set it to 100 pixels or less, and begin to colour the line art according to the picture.
- 2 Click on your 'Shadows' layer and lock transparency. Find the same colour you used with your shadows and pick a lighter shade (or darker shade) as the background colour. Click on your Gradient tool. Set the gradient to the circle-type and drag the mouse in the direction where the lighter shade is in the centre.
- 3 Create a new layer above your other layers and repeat the previous step but with your lighter shade as the dark shade, and your darker shade being replaced by white. White is still in the middle. Set it to Multiply.



- 4 Add a new layer above that one and name it 'Sparkles'. Find your soft-edged brush and begin dabbing little white dots around the fairy. Use large ones first, then add smaller ones beside the larger white dots. Set the layer to Overlay.
- 5 Create one more new layer and click on your Elliptical Marquee tool. Make a circle selection around your fairy (hold Shift to keep the perfect circle shape), right-click/Ctrl-click, and stroke it with white at 3-5 pixels. Gaussian Blur the layer at 6 pixels and set the layer to Overlay.
- 6 Flatten your layers (Layer>Flatten Image). Duplicate the final layer and set the duplicated later on Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. Click Colourise, and select a hue. Click OK and Gaussian Blur the image at 6 pixels. Finally, set the duplicated layer to Hard Light and flatten it. **CA-P**